



Senior Driving Ability: Questions to Ask the Primary Care Provider

Consulting with a primary care physician or advanced practice provider is a crucial step in assessing a senior's driving ability. These medical professionals can provide valuable insights into how health conditions, medications, and age-related changes might affect driving safety. The following list of questions is designed to help you have a comprehensive and productive conversation with the medical provider. These questions cover various aspects of health and safety related to driving, ensuring that you gather all the necessary information to make an informed decision.

Remember to approach this conversation with sensitivity and, if possible, include your loved one in the discussion. It's also a good idea to take notes or ask for written recommendations for future reference.

Important Note on Privacy: Before the appointment, discuss with your loved one whether they want to be present for the entire conversation with the medical provider. Some seniors may prefer to have certain aspects discussed privately. Respect their wishes and ensure they're comfortable with the process.

When consulting with your loved ones primary care provider about a senior's driving ability, consider asking the following questions:

1. Medical Conditions and Driving
 - "Are there any medical conditions that my loved one has that could affect their driving ability?"
 - "How might these conditions progress, and what impact could that have on driving in the future?"
2. Medications and Driving
 - "Do any of the current medications have side effects that could impair driving?"
 - "Are there any medication interactions we should be concerned about in relation to driving?"
3. Cognitive Function
 - "Have you noticed any changes in cognitive function that might affect decision-making or reaction time while driving?"
 - "Would you recommend a cognitive assessment specifically related to driving skills?"
4. Physical Abilities
 - "Are there any physical limitations (e.g., arthritis, reduced neck mobility) that could make driving unsafe?"



- "Would you recommend a physical evaluation to assess driving-related abilities?"
- 5. Vision and Hearing
 - "Are there any vision or hearing issues that could compromise driving safety?"
 - "How often should vision and hearing be reassessed in relation to driving ability?"
- 6. Professional Evaluation
 - "Would you recommend a professional driving evaluation? If so, can you refer us to a specialist?"
 - "Are you aware of any local programs or resources for assessing senior driving ability?"
- 7. Legal and Ethical Considerations
 - "Do you have any legal obligation to report concerns about a patient's driving ability to the DMV?"
 - "In your professional opinion, is it safe for my loved one to continue driving at this time?" We also like to ask the physician, "If this were your parent, what would your recommendation be?"
- 8. Future Planning
 - "How often should we reassess driving ability?"
 - "What signs or changes should we watch for that might indicate it's time to stop driving?"
- 9. Documentation
 - "Can you provide a written assessment of your recommendations regarding my loved one's driving ability?"
 - "Would you be willing to help explain your medical opinion to my loved one if they're resistant to changes?"
- 10. Quality of Life and Independence
 - "How might your recommendations about driving affect my loved one's overall quality of life and independence?"
 - "Are there ways to mitigate any negative impacts on their lifestyle while ensuring their safety and the safety of others on the road?"

Remember: It's important to include your loved one in this conversation with their medical provider if possible. This can help them feel more involved in the decision-making process and may make them more receptive to the medical provider's recommendations.

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